

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 GABORO 00524 031512Z

ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 INR-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 SP-02

DHA-02 NSC-05 NSCE-00 IO-06 PM-03 /042 W

-----031543 003786 /47

R 031250Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 9556

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

S E C R E T GABORONE 0524

LIMDIS

CAPE TOWN FOR AMBASSADOR BOWDLER

JOHANNESBURG FOR CONGEN AND STEMPEL

1.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, PINS, BC, SF

SUBJECT: SSRC LEADER MOKOENA DETAINED BY BOTSWANA POLICE

1. SUMMARY: A WEEK AGO A SOUTH AFRICAN STUDENT CAME TO THE EMBASSY TO INFORM US THAT SSRC LEADER SIMON MOKOENA WAS DETAINED BY BOTSWANA POLICE ON FEBRUARY 23 ON SUSPICION OF BEING "SOUTH AFRICAN AGENT". FROM SPECIAL BRANCH WE CONFIRMED AN INVESTIGATION IS UNDERWAY OF CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING UNAUTHORIZED VISIT BY MOKOENA AND FOUR COLLEAGUES TO RSA IN JANUARY. THE FIVE, PRESUMABLY EN ROUTE TO SOWETO, WERE DETAINED IN ZEERUST BY SAP. MOKOENA ESCAPED BUT OTHER FOUR REMAINED IN CUSTODY. ONE HAS SINCE FALLEN TO HIS DEATH WHILE IN CAPTIVITY IN JOHANNESBURG. THIS MESSAGE REVIEWS FACTS AND ANALYZES HYPOTHESES ABOUT THIS BIZARRE AND UNEXPECTED DEVELOPMENT. END SUMMARY.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 GABORO 00524 031512Z

2. MOKOENA'S STORY OF HOW HE ESCAPED FROM SA POLICE AFTER DETENTION APPARENTLY NOT ACCEPTED BY ENTIRE SSRC COMMUNITY HERE. SOMEONE TIPPED OFF BOTSWANA POLICE WHO, ON BASIS OF THE TIP AND CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE, WERE READY TO DEPORT HIM TO RSA IMMEDIATELY. HOWEVER, LOCAL UNHCR REP INTERVENED AND CONVINCED POLICE (A) TO

KEEP MOKOENA IN BOTSWANA PENDING INVESTIGATION AND (B) TO ALLOW UNHCR TO FIND COUNTRY OTHER THAN RSA TO WHICH MOKOENA COULD BE SENT.

3. POLICE INVESTIGATION HAS BEEN COMPLETED. NEITHER UNHCR NOR EMBASSY KNOWS RESULTS. WE HAVE LEARNED THAT GOB HAS DECLARED MOKOENA "PROHIBITED IMMIGRANT". HOWEVER, IT HAS NO PLANS TO DEPORT HIM TO SOUTH AFRICA. UNHCR CURRENTLY TRYING TO FIND COUNTRY, PREFERABLY IN AFRICA, TO ACCEPT HIM. (LAST PERSON IN SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES WAS EVENTUALLY SENT TO LIBERIA.) UNHCR REP SURMISES MOKOENA WILL BE IN DETENTION "A LONG TIME" WHILE SEARCH FOR RECEIVING COUNTRY UNDER WAY.

4. COMMENT: MOKOENA WAS PROBABLY TURNED IN BY ONE OF HIS FELLOW STUDENTS. UNHCR REP AGREES AND CONCLUDES THIS INDICATES A "SPLIT" IN SSRC, A DEVELOPMENT WHICH UNHCR DEPLORES. WE DO NOT KNOW THE MOTIVATION OF MOKOENA'S COLLEAGUES --- OR REASON FOR THE DEADLY ALLEGATION THAT MOKOENA IS SOUTH AFRICAN AGENT. HOWEVER, THE UNANIMOUS REACTION AMONG EMBOFFS HERE WHO MET MOKOENA, AND USIS LIBRARIAN (HIGHLY RESPECTED U.S. CITIZEN) WHO HAS DAILY CONTACT WITH WIDE RANGE OF SSRC STUDENTS, IS THAT MOKOENA IS NOT SAG AGENT. TO EXPLAIN EVENTS, WE HAVE DEVELOPED FOLLOWING HYPOTHESES IN DESCENDING ORDER OF PROBABILITY:

A. THAT MIKOENA IS NOT AN AGENT; THAT HE WAS SET UP BY ANC/PAC/SOVIET EMBASSY OR OTHER LEFT-LEANING PERSON OR ORGANIZATION DESIRING TO WEAKEN STUDENT LEADERSHIP AND SILENCE SSRC VOCAL CRITICISMS OF ANC AND OTHERS WHO
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 GABORO 00524 031512Z

ARE SEEKING TO CONVINCE STUDENTS TO ACCEPT MILITARY TRAINING;

B. THAT MIKOENA WAS SET UP BY SAG IN ORDER TO WEAKEN SSRC LEADERSHIP;

C. THAT HE WAS UNFAIRLY ACCUSED BY A RIVAL SSRC MEMBER WHO FOR SOME REASON HARBORS PERSONAL ANIMOSITY TOWARDS MOKOENA;

D. THAT HE ACTED STUPIDLY IN MAKING UNAUTHORIZED TRIP TO RSA DURING WHICH HIS FRIENDS WERE DETAINED; THAT HIS ESCAPE FROM SAP WAS UNBELIEVEABLY LUCKY, A COMMENT APPLIES EQUALLY TO A AND C ABOVE.

E. FINALLY, THERE IS THE POSSIBILITY HE IS AN AGENT OF SAG.

5. WE WOULD WELCOME ANY INFORMATION OR REACTIONS FROM

ADDRESSEES, ESPECIALLY FROM JOHANNESBURG, AS TO MOKOENA'S
BONA FIDES, RELIABILITY, REPUTATION, ETC. THERE IS
APPARENTLY A SPLIT IN SSRC HERE; EITHER MOKOENA OR
HIS POSSIBLE ANTAGONIST MAY BE WORKING FOR SAG. IF
SO, WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW ASAP.

NORLAND

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DETENTION, ESPIONAGE, POLICE INVESTIGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 03-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977GABORO00524
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770073-0764
Format: TEL
From: GABORONE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770398/aaaadifn.tel
Line Count: 122
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 70afd7be-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3222368
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SSRC LEADER DETAINED BY BOTSWANA POLICE
TAGS: SREF, PINS, BC, SF, SSRC, (MOKOENA, SIMON)
To: CAPE TOWN
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/70afd7be-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009